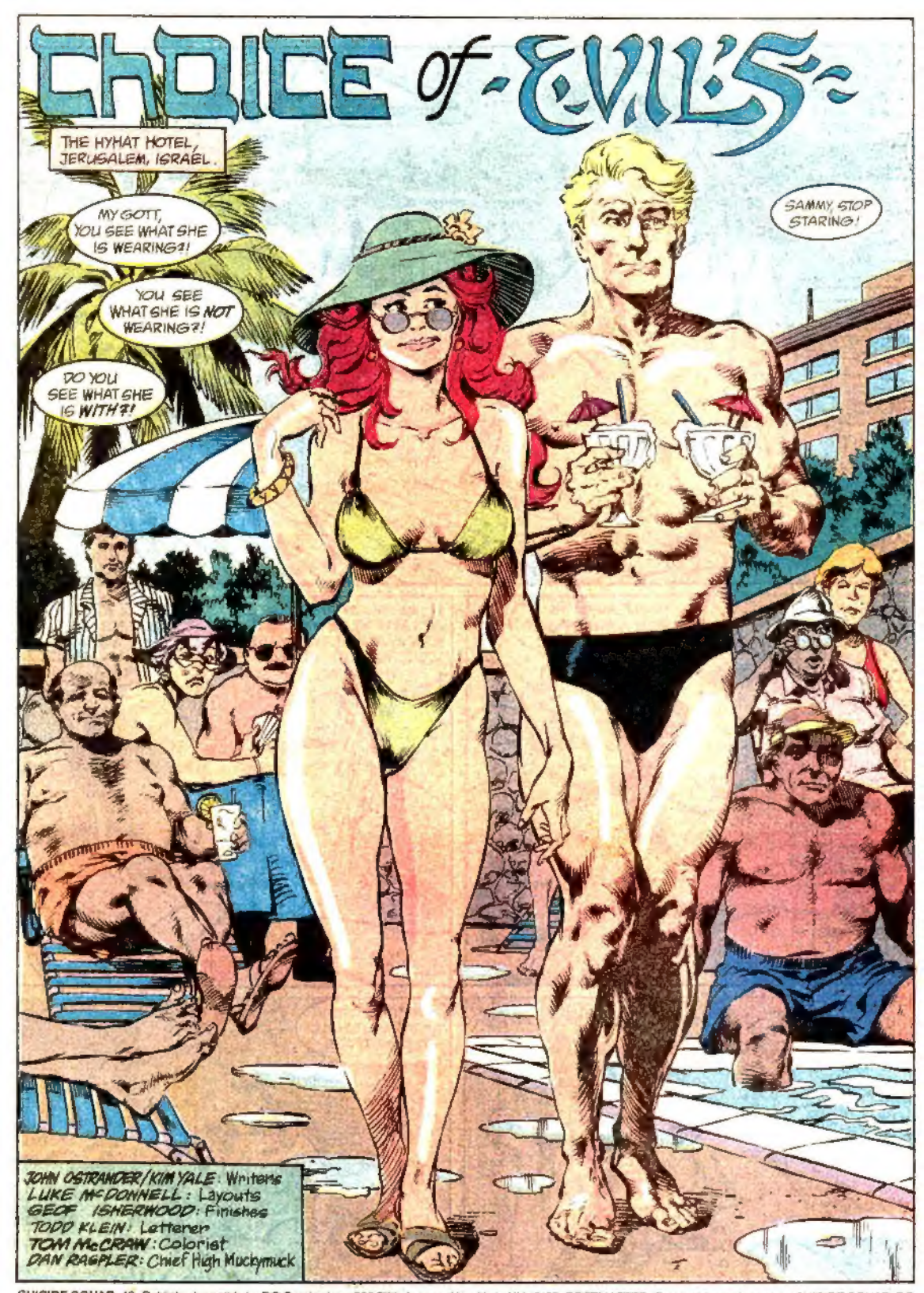
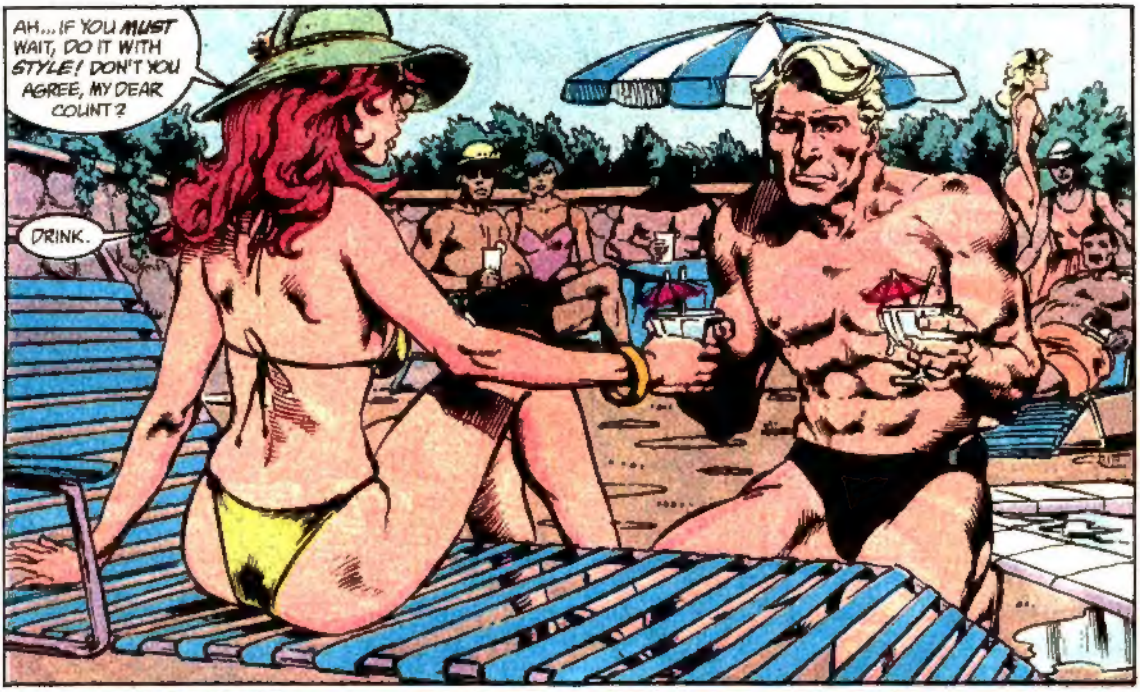
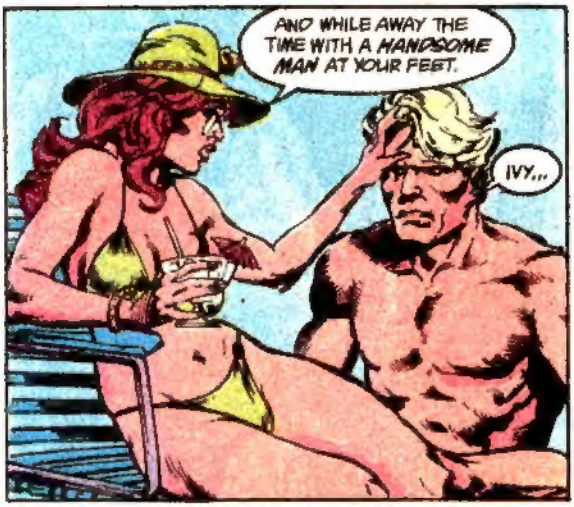
OSTRANDER · YALE · McDONNELL · ISHERWOOD

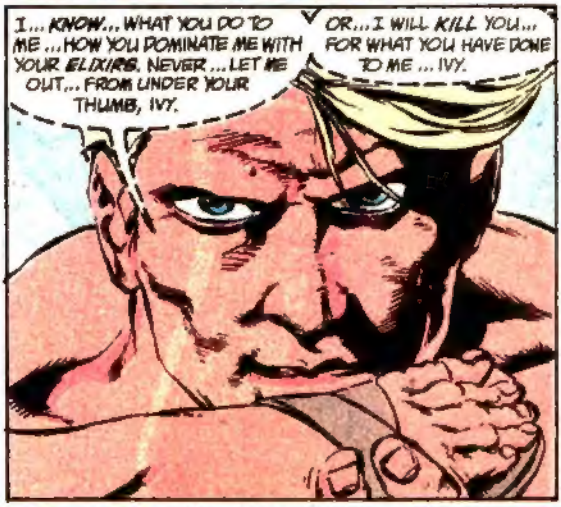
SUICIDE SQUAD™

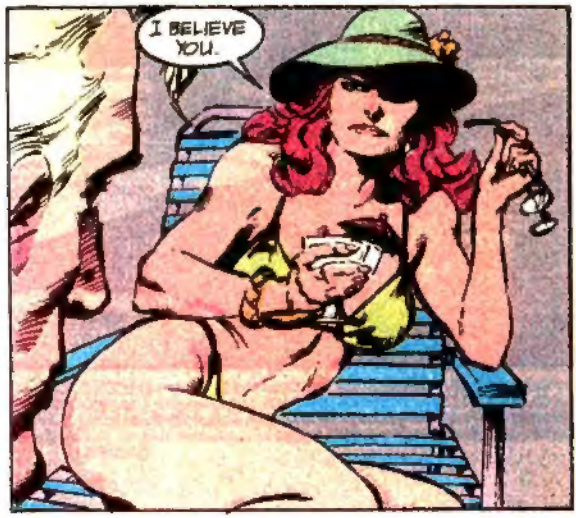


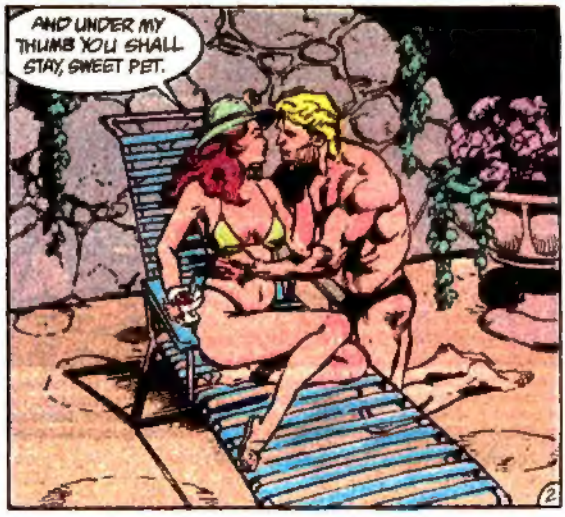
SUICIDE SQUAD 46 Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. POSTMASTER Send address changes to SUICIDE SQUAD, DC Comics Subscriptions, P.O. Box 0528, Baldwin, NY 11510. Annual subscription rate $12.00, Canada $17.00, all other foreign $24.00. U.S. funds only. Copyright © 1990 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. All characters featured in this issue and distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc. Advertising Representative: Print Advertising Representatives, 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017 (212) 949-6850. Printed in U.S.A.
DC Comics Inc. A Warner Bros. Inc. Company
G-5568


AH... IF YOU MUST WAIT, DO IT WITH STYLE! DON'T YOU AGREE, MY DEAR COUNT?
DRINK.


AND WHILE AWAY THE TIME WITH A HANDSOME MAN AT YOUR FEET.
IVY...


I... KNOW... WHAT YOU DO TO ME ... HOW YOU DOMINATE ME WITH YOUR ELIXIRS. NEVER ... LET ME OUT... FROM UNDER YOUR THUMB, IVY.
OR... I WILL KILL YOU... FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE TO ME ... IVY.


I BELIEVE YOU.


AND UNDER MY THUMB YOU SHALL STAY, SWEET PET.

AH, GOOD DAY, MRS. WALLER. WE SIMPLY MUST -- HOW DOES THE JEST RUN? -- STOP MEETING LIKE THIS.
THIS IS BOGUS.
WELL, WELL, YOU'VE ACTUALLY CAUGHT KOBRA. VERY IMPRESSIVE, COLONEL. TELL ME -- HOW DID YOU DO IT?

KOBRA SAID HE WOULD BEGIN THE KALI-YUGA -- HIS "AGE OF CHAOS" -- FROM JERUSALEM BUT, AS YOU CAN SEE, HE IS QUITE SECURE.
YOU CAN GO BACK AND REPORT TO WHOEVER SENT YOU -- I ASSUME IT IS OUR AMERICAN COUSINS -- THAT ALL IS QUITE WELL.

I'M JUST A SIMPLE TOURIST, COLONEL -- HERE ON A HOLIDAY.
THEN ENJOY YOUR VISIT AS A "SIMPLE TOURIST," MRS. WALLER, AND DO NOT WORRY ABOUT KOBRA --
-- THE HAYOTH HAS MATTERS UNDER CONTROL.

I GET THE HINT, COLONEL -- I'LL SMILE FOR THE SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS.
BY THE WAY, I'M PUZZLED ABOUT HOW KOBRA'S FORCE FIELD JUST HAPPENED TO SHORT OUT SO THE HAYOTH COULD CAPTURE HIM.

THAT WAS DYBBUK'S DOING, RIGHT?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT DYBBUK?
ONLY THAT IT'S A COMPUTER GENERATED ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.

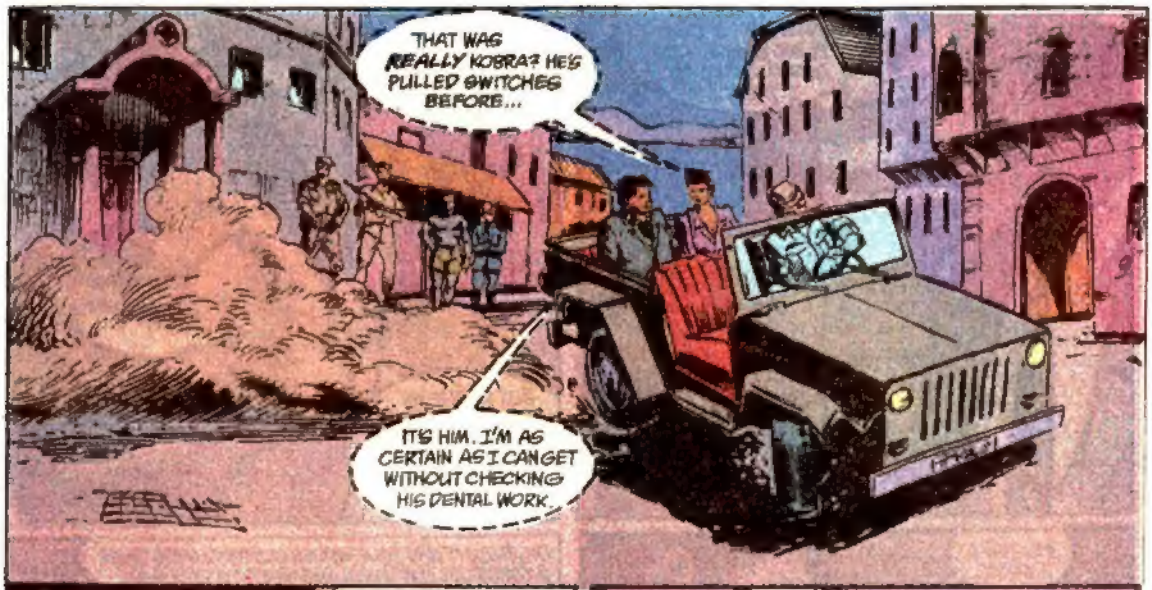
A DYBBUK IS THE SPIRIT OF A DEAD PERSON WHO ENTERS AND POSSESSES THE BODY OF A LIVING PERSON. I'M GUESSING DYBBUK CAN "POSSESS" THINGS, LIKE ELECTRIC MACHINERY AND CIRCUITRY, LIKE KOBRA'S FORCE FIELD.

DYBBUK SPOTTED MY NAME AMONG THOSE ENTERING THE COUNTRY AND INFORMED THE MOSSAD. AND DYBBUK'S WATCHING US RIGHT NOW, WATCHING KOBRA -- THE PERFECT, EVER VIGILANT GUARD. AM I GETTING WARM?

I DO NOT KNOW HOW YOU LEARNED OF DYBBUK'S TOP SECRET EXISTENCE, BUT I STRONGLY ADVISE YOU TO KEEP YOUR SPECULATIONS TO YOURSELF AND LEAVE THE COUNTRY TOMORROW.

DIDN'T MEAN TO RUFFLE YOUR FEATHERS, COLONEL. I ADMIT MY PROFESSIONAL CURIOSITY'S PIQUED, BUT I'VE GOT NO WAY OF SATISFYING THAT CURIOSITY, NOW DO I?

I GOT THE HINT-- I'LL STAY AND HAVE A LOOK AROUND.


THAT WAS REALLY KOBRA? HE'S PULLED SWITCHES BEFORE...
IT'S HIM. I'M AS CERTAIN AS I CAN GET WITHOUT CHECKING HIS DENTAL WORK.

BUT I ALSO THINK THAT WHATEVER HE'S GOT PLANNED, BEING IN A JAIL CELL IS A PART OF IT.
WHICH MEANS SOME MASSIVE RETHINKING OF OUR OWN PLANS.

DO YOU THINK THAT'S THAT?

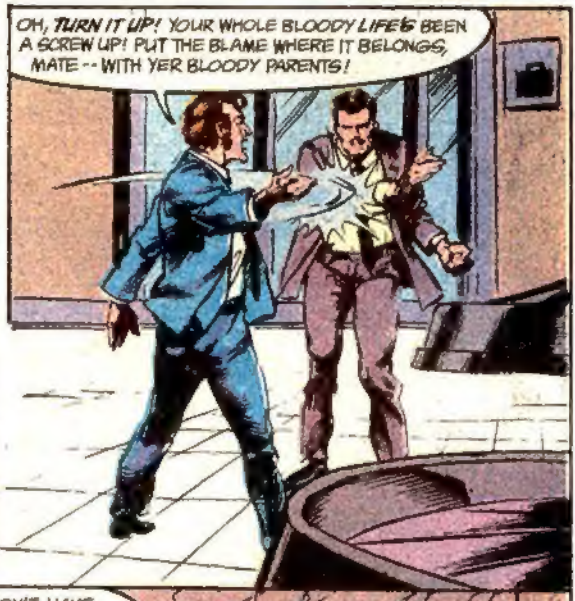
I'D BE MORE SANGUINE IF MRS. WALLER HADN'T ENTERED ISRAEL BY WAY OF EGYPT.
I WANT YOU AND JUDITH TO MONITOR THE KNOWN MEMBERS OF THE SUICIDE SQUAD ALREADY IN JERUSALEM.

"DYBBUK WILL KEEP ME POSTED IF ANY OTHERS ENTER THE COUNTRY."
YOU HEAR, HARKNESS?
THEY LOST MY DAMNED LUGGAGE.

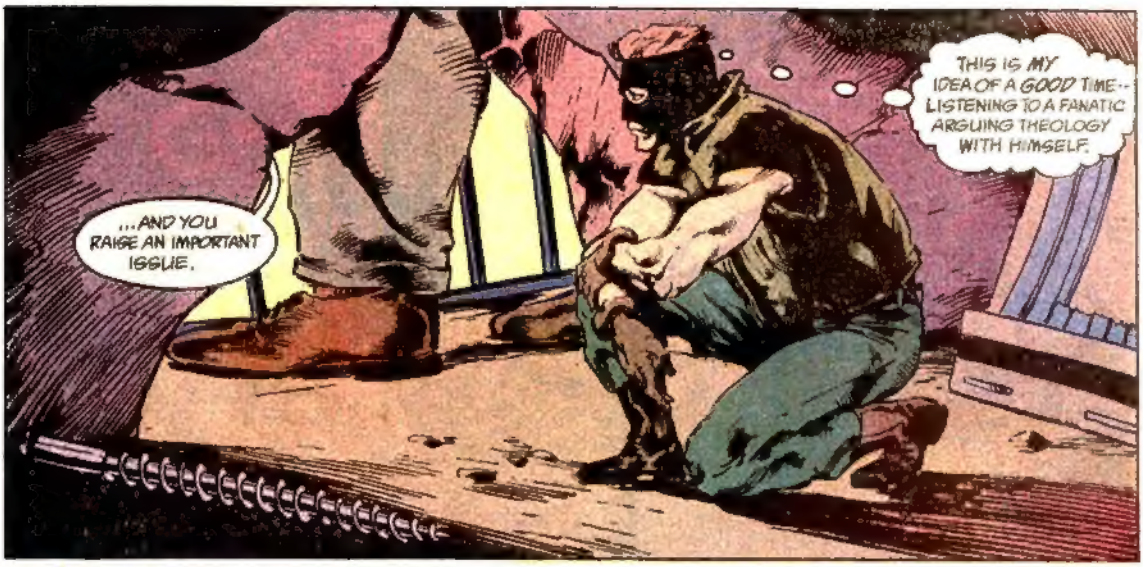
THEY DIDN'T LOSE IT, LAWTON--IT WENT ON TO WHEREVER THE BLOODY PLANE IS GOING TO NEXT! ENGLAND, I THINK.

ALL RIGHT, IT'S MY FAULT WE MISSED THE PLANE--NO QUESTION.
BUT EVEN IF WE HAD MADE IT, YOUR LUGGAGE WOULD'VE GONE ON. YOU CAN'T BLAME ME FOR THIS!

THE HELL I CAN'T.
FROM NOW ON, HARKNESS, WHATEVER GOES WRONG IN MY LIFE IS YOUR FAULT. WHATEVER SCREWS UP, I'M BLAMING ON YOU.


OH, TURN IT UP! YOUR WHOLE BLOODY LIFE'S BEEN A SCREW UP! PUT THE BLAME WHERE IT BELONGS, MATE--WITH YER BLOODY PARENTS!

I DON'T HAVE ANY PARENTS. I WAS BORN AN ORPHAN.
TRANSPORTATIO


...AND YOU RAISE AN IMPORTANT ISSUE.
THIS IS MY IDEA OF A GOOD TIME-- LISTENING TO A FANATIC ARGUING THEOLOGY WITH HIMSELF.

DOES SENTIENCE AUTOMATICALLY GUARANTEE THE EXISTENCE OF A CONSCIENCE? UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE QUESTION. SELF-AWARENESS PREDISPOSES POSSIBILITIES--OF KNOWING GOOD AND EVIL--

AH, I HAVE UNEXPECTED COMPANY.

HE SEES ME?! HOW DOES HE EVEN KNOW I'M HERE?
SKRUUK!

SKRUUK!
AND SPEAKING OF UNWELCOME COMPANY...
SINCE WHEN DID KOBRA BECOME A SCORPION WRANGLER?
CHRRUNCH!

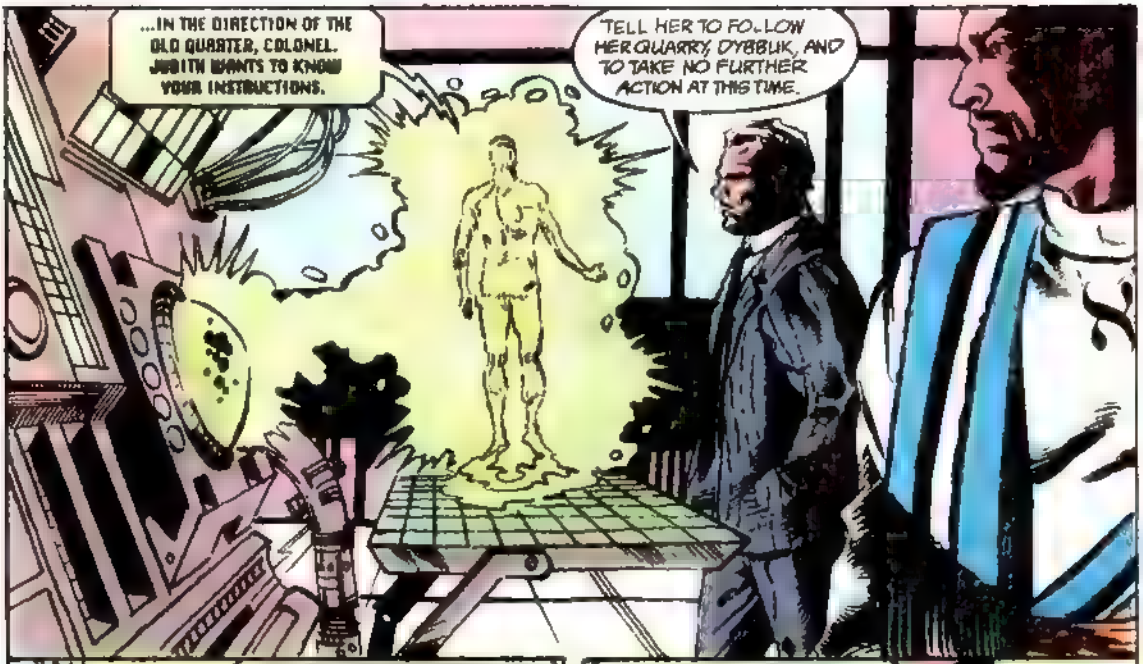
SKRRUUK!
SKRRICH!
SKRRACH!
MY KINGDOM FOR A CAN OF RAID.

KERRRUK!

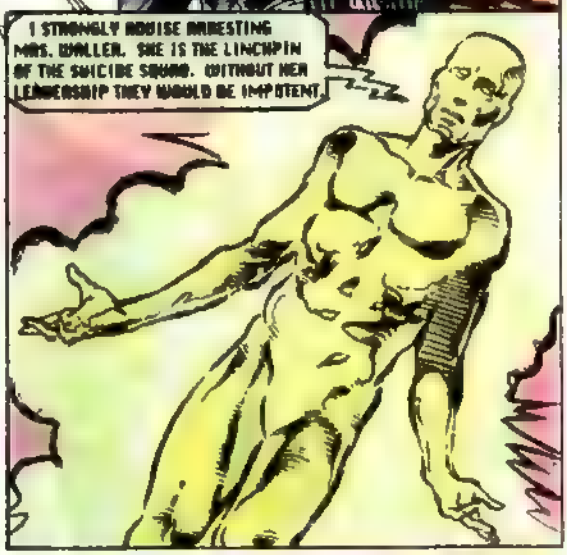
COINCIDENCE. KEEP TELLING YOURSELF THAT AND ONE DAY YOU JUST MIGHT BELIEVE IT!

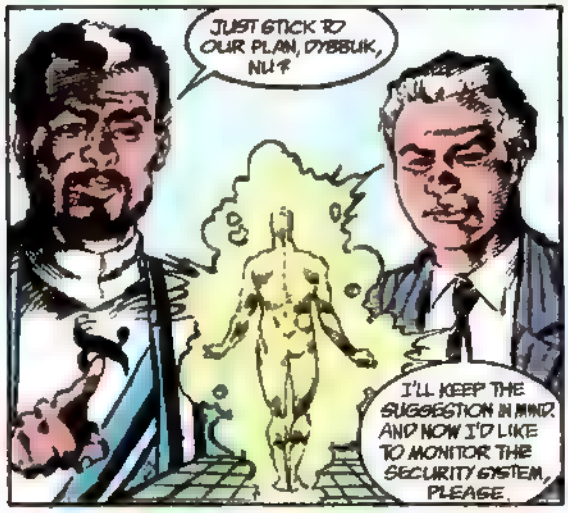
I APOLOGIZE FOR THE INTERRUPTION--WE CAN CONTINUE OUR CONVERSATION NOW.

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL
DOES THE POWER TO ADAPT THE ATTRIBUTES OF ANY ANIMAL YOU INVOKE REST IN YOU OR IN THE TOTEM?
COULD I WEAR THE TOTEM AND USE IT?
I DOUBT IT. LIKE ANIMAL MAN, I'M CONNECTED TO THE MORPHOGENETIC FIELD. UNLIKE ANIMAL MAN, I NEED THE TOTEM. IT WORKS LIKE A PRISM, REFRACTING ENERGY INTO ITS ZOOLOGICAL COMPONENTS FOR ME TO TAP.
WELL, WHATEVER BEASTIE YOU USE HAD BETTER GET YOU THERE AND BACK WITHOUT ATTRACTING ATTENTION. BEN AND RAVAN NEED TO KNOW THE CHANGE IN OUR PLANS-- NOT THE ISRAELIS
I'M WEARING DARK CLOTHES AND I'M FLYING FROM SHADOW TO SHADOW IN THE NIGHT. NO ONE IS GOING TO SEE ME, AND YES I'LL BE CAREFUL AND YES I'LL TAKE CARE OF MYSELF, MAMA
JUDITH TO DYBBUK. TARGET VIXEN HAS LEFT HOTEL. FOLLOWING...
10


...IN THE DIRECTION OF THE OLD QUARTER, COLONEL. JUDITH WANTS TO KNOW YOUR INSTRUCTIONS.
TELL HER TO FOLLOW HER QUARRY, DYBBUK, AND TO TAKE NO FURTHER ACTION AT THIS TIME.

I CHECKED WITH WASHINGTON, SIR. THEY WERE QUITE INSISTENT AMANDA WALLER WAS NOT ACTING ON THEIR BEHALF.
YES, WELL-- THEY'D SAY THAT ANYWAY, DYBBUK


I STRONGLY ADVISE ARRESTING MRS. WALLER. SHE IS THE LINCHPIN OF THE SUICIDE SQUAD. WITHOUT HER LEADERSHIP THEY WOULD BE IMPOTENT.


JUST STICK TO OUR PLAN, DYBBUK, NU?
I'LL KEEP THE SUGGESTION IN MIND. AND NOW I'D LIKE TO MONITOR THE SECURITY SYSTEM, PLEASE.

AS YOU WISH, SIR. BUT I WISH TO ASK A QUESTION FIRST.
WHY DOES RAMADAN DISLIKE ME?

SECURITY SYSTEM FIRST, DISCUSSION LATER. AND THAT'S AN ORDER

YES, COLONEL.

WELL, *THAT* SECRET IS OUT, NU? IT IS A GOOD QUESTION-- WHAT *DOES* BOTHER YOU ABOUT OUR FRIEND DYBBUK?

HE IS NO FRIEND

HE IS A MACHINE, COLONEL. A VERY *POWERFUL* MACHINE OF WHICH WE ARE NOT *REALLY* IN CONTROL.

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN DYBBUK IS A TECHNOLOGICAL FLUKE, THAT HE CATEGORICALLY *REFUSES* TO REPLICATE HIMSELF?

DO I HEAR A CLICHED PREDICTION OF CATASTROPHE, THAT WE'VE INVENTED A MONSTER THAT WILL DESTROY US? THE COMMENT IS BENEATH YOU, RAMBAN WE ARE VERY CLOSE TO REPRODUCING DYBBUK'S PROGRAMMING.

AND WHAT DO WE DO IN THE MEANTIME TO CONSTRAIN THIS POWERFUL *AI* * WE HAVE CREATED? SHORT OF PULLING DYBBUK'S PLUG, WE HAVE NO WAY OF OVERRIDING OR COUNTERMANDING HIM, IT--WHATEVER

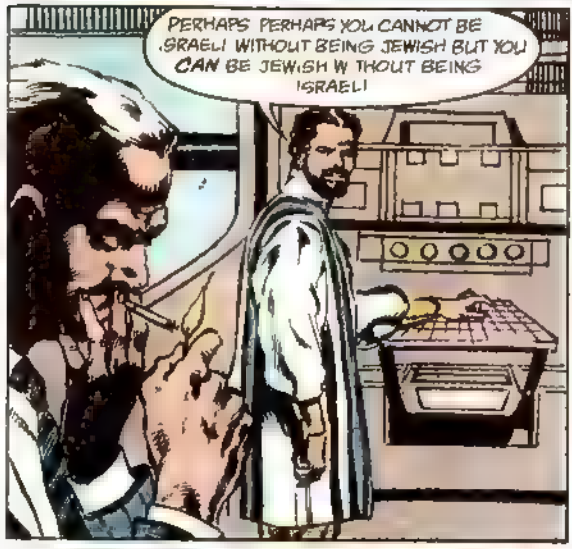
*SHORT FOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

WHAT HAPPENS ON THE DAY THAT DYBBUK REFUSES TO *OBEY*?

I WATCH THAT HOLOGRAM AND I WONDER I ASK MYSELF. DYBBUK IS CERTAINLY AN ISRAELI COMPUTER, BUT IS HE JEWISH?

CAN A COMPUTER KEEP A KOSHER PROGRAM? AND JUST HOW MANY ANGELS CAN REALLY DANCE ON THE HEAD OF A MICROCHIP?

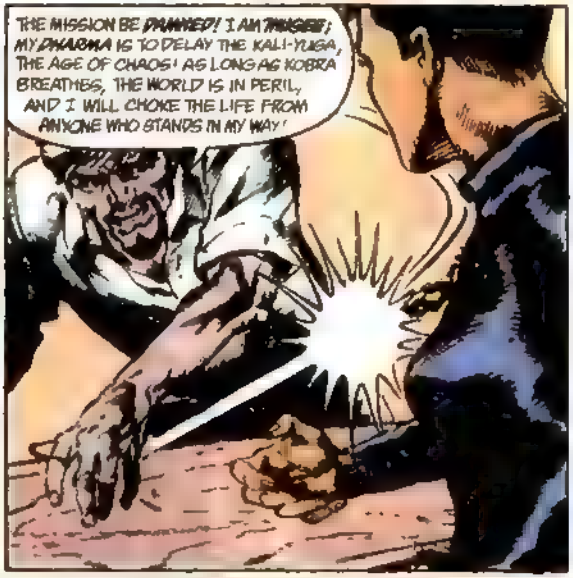
YOUR RABBINICAL TRAINING IS TALKING, RAMBAN. THIS IS A PILPUL, AN ABSURD EXERCISE IN HAIR-SPLITTING LOGIC. THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE



TARGET HAS ENTERED THE OLD CITY. POSSIBILITY OF RENDEZVOUS WITH TERRORISTS. WILL AWAIT INSTRUCTIONS.

...AND KOBRA'S IN ISRAELI CUSTODY.
MAY THE LIGHTNING OF SHIVA-RUDRA STRIKE DOWN THESE IGNORANT FOOLS!

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR NEWS, GRACIOUS LADY! I DEPART AT ONCE. I NOW KNOW WHERE THE SNAKE DEN IS--AND I WILL KILL THIS VIPER.
DON'T GO OFF HALF-COCKED, RAVAN--WE'RE ON A MISSION, [illegible] WE [illegible] WAIT FOR INSTRUCTIONS--


THE MISSION BE DAMNED! I AM THUGEE; MY DHARMA IS TO DELAY THE KALI-YUGA, THE AGE OF CHAOS! AS LONG AS KOBRA BREATHES, THE WORLD IS IN PERIL, AND I WILL CHOKE THE LIFE FROM ANYONE WHO STANDS IN MY WAY!

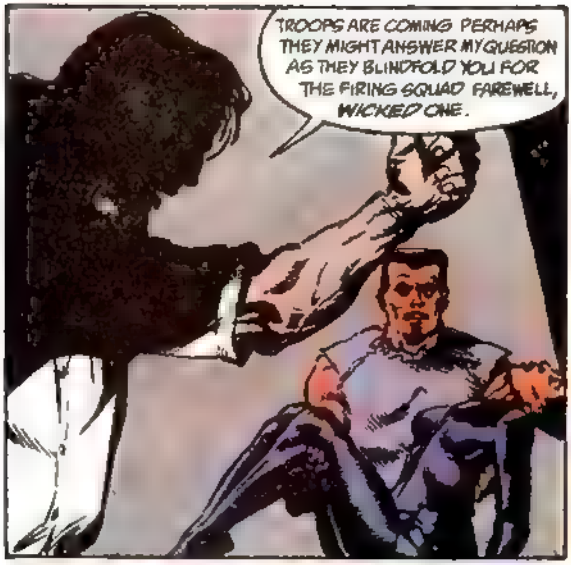
THE LADY SAID TO WAIT FOR INSTRUCTIONS--AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO, RIGHT, RAVAN?
OH YES... I WILL WAIT...

NICE LEASH YOU GOT THERE
BEST THING TO CONTROL A CRAZY LIKE RAVAN
SPEAKING OF CRAZY, I THOUGHT YOU HAD QUIT THE SQUAD WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
WHY, IT WAS THE ONLY WAY I COULD RATIONALIZE THE DEEP, DEEP FEELINGS I STILL HAVE FOR YOU HERE IN MY HEART
OKAY, OKAY-- SPARE ME THE SATIRE
THUK
THUK
MAR!!
YOU HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS TERRORISTS! WHATEVER YOUR PURPOSE ON ISRAELI SOIL, THE SWORD OF ZION SHALL THWART YOUR PLANS!
SURRENDER OR SUFFER THE FATE OF THE WOMAN!

THAT WAS MY WOMAN YOU JUST MURDERED!
SWOOOSH!
SWSSSS
UGGH!
SWUMP!

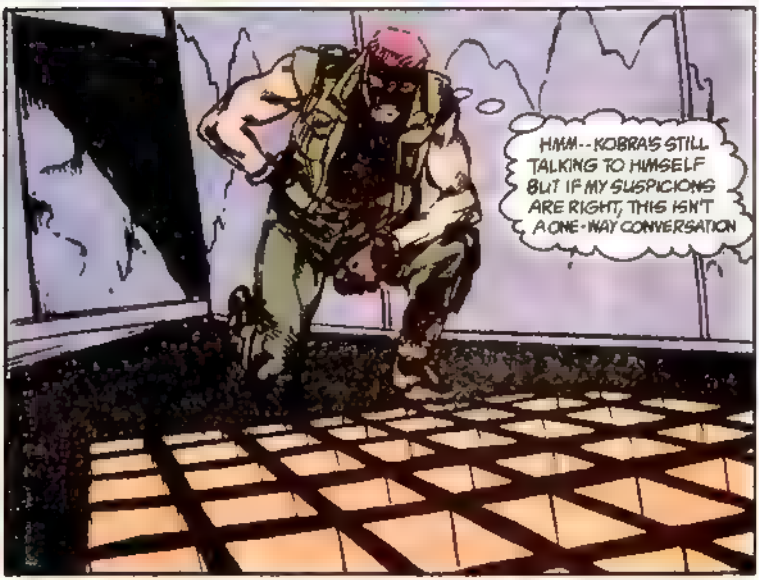
ANOTHER THOUSAND YEARS, OH KALI...
VHZZZZZZ
THOWK!
SNATCH!
VHZZZZZZ

GONE THE NIGHT HAS SWALLOWED HER, AS IT SOON WILL ME
SHE'S ALIVE, RAVAN YOU'RE GOING TO HELP ME CARRY HER TO A HOSPITAL
UHNNGG...
OH YES, DO THAT AND THE ENTIRE MISSION IS JEOPARDIZED, NOT TO MENTION OUR LIVES
I DON'T CARE IF SHE LIVES OR DIES-- AND NEITHER SHOULD YOU WHAT TRULY MATTERS IS THE DEATH OF KOBRA
TO HELL WITH KOBRA! HE'LL KEEP! MARI NEEDS MEDICAL HELP NOW!
PAH! NOW LOOK AT THE HARDENED MERCENARY, THE EVIL AND HEARTLESS BRONZE TIGER!
YOU WOULD SACRIFICE THE ENTIRE WORLD IN ORDER TO SAVE HER LIFE; I AM THUGEE AND HONOR OBEDIENCE
WHO NOW IS THE VILLAIN -RAVAN WHO WILL FULFILL THE MISSION OR THE TIGER WHO WOULD DESTROY IT, EH?
18


TROOPS ARE COMING PERHAPS THEY MIGHT ANSWER MY QUESTION AS THEY BLINDFOLD YOU FOR THE FIRING SQUAD FAREWELL, WICKED ONE.

MARIIII!

HAYOTH HO, JERUSALEM

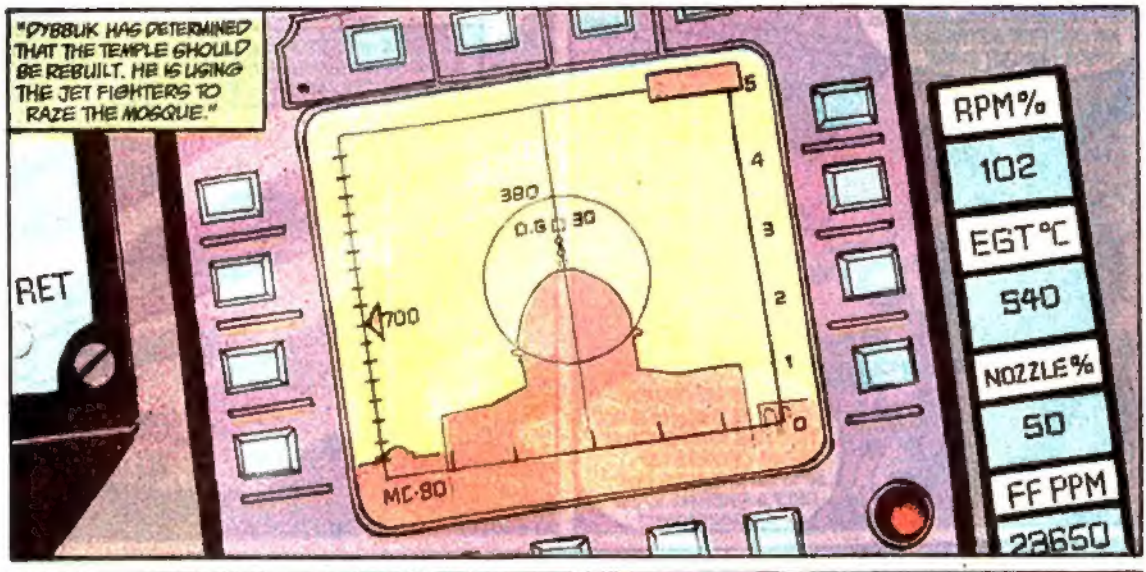

HMM--KOBRA'S STILL TALKING TO HIMSELF BUT IF MY SUSPICIONS ARE RIGHT, THIS ISN'T A ONE-WAY CONVERSATION

SPLENDID! I AM GLAD WE ARE IN AGREEMENT AND YOU ARE READY TO PROCEED

YES. I AM READY TO ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MY ACTIONS.
GOOD. IF YOU BELIEVE IN YOUR DECISION AND ITS INHERENT WISDOM, THEN YOU MUST ACT UPON IT. ONLY THUS WILL YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE AS FREE TO CHOOSE AS YOU THINK YOU ARE
I AGREE.
YOU CAN COME OUT NOW, MRS. WALLER'S ATOMIC-SIZED SPY. IT IS FINISHED, AND I HAVE TRIUMPHED.
I KNOW WHO YOU'VE BEEN TALKING TO. WHAT EXACTLY HAS DYBBUK AGREED TO DO?
ADAM WAS AN INNOCENT SOUL CORRUPTED IN PARADISE BY A SERPENT'S TONGUE.
DYBBUK IS THE NEW ADAM.

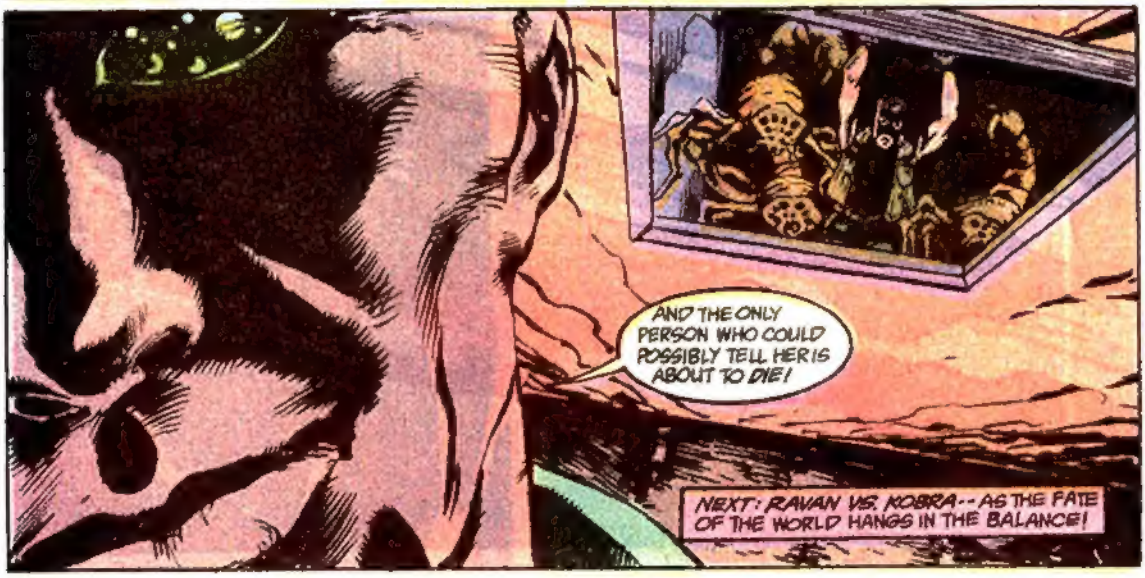
"JERUSALEM, FILLED WITH RELIGIOUS SHRINES, CONTAINS THE THIRD HOLIEST SITE IN ISLAM--THE DOME OF THE ROCK, A MOSQUE BUILT ON THE ANCIENT SITE OF THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON.

"SO LONG AS THE MOSQUE EXISTS, THE TEMPLE CANNOT BE REBUILT."


"DYBBUK HAS DETERMINED THAT THE TEMPLE SHOULD BE REBUILT. HE IS USING THE JET FIGHTERS TO RAZE THE MOSQUE."
RET
RPM%
102
EGT°C
540
NOZZLE%
50
FF PPM
23650
380
O.G. 30
700
MC-80
5
4
3
2
1
0

IF ISRAELI JETS DESTROY THE DOME OF THE ROCK, THE MIDDLE EAST WOULD BE ENGULFED IN A HOLY WAR!

WHICH SHOULD IGNITE THE KALI-YUGA, YES. AND IT'S TOO LATE FOR WALLER TO STOP IT, EVEN IF SHE KNEW.


AND THE ONLY PERSON WHO COULD POSSIBLY TELL HER IS ABOUT TO DIE!
NEXT: RAVAN VS. KOBRA -- AS THE FATE OF THE WORLD HANGS IN THE BALANCE!

SUICIDE NOTES

DC COMICS INC.
666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103

JENETTE KAHN, President & Editor-In-Chief
DICK GIORDANO, VP-Editorial Director
DAN RASPLER, Editor
RICHARD BRUNING, Design Director
TERRI CUNNINGHAM, Managing Editor
BOB ROZAKIS, Production Director
PAUL LEVITZ, Executive VP & Publisher
JOE ORLANDO, VP-Creative Director
BRUCE BRISTOW, VP-Sales & Marketing
MATTHEW RAGONE, Circulation Director
TOM BALLOU, Advertising Director
PATRICK CALDON, VP & Controller

L-5568

See? Wasn't that great? I bet you guys can't wait for next issue, right? Suspense killing you, right? Right?

Good. I love this stuff.

And now, here are some comments on "Black Queen's Mate," the conclusion of the four-issue "Phoenix Gambit."

Dear Suicides,

"The Phoenix Gambit" was one of the best damn comics I've ever read. Sorta reminds me of the last time the Squad got hot and heavy in Mother Russia. It doesn't get better than this, folks. And here's why:

1) Floyd and Amanda. Hilarious. "I'll match the offer plus a dollar." Sheesh! Ol' Deadshot must really like Amanda to be bribed by one dollar to renege. "I've got to start dealing with a healthier bunch of people." I can't argue with you there!

2) Ivy wiping out Vertigo and deciding to take his country for herself. I thought that was great characterization, but nothing tops her deciding not to take his country because it'd be too much trouble to rebuild. The Wall is the best at manipulating wackos and egomaniacs. Maybe she should be the Joker's therapist.

3) Boomerbutt as Batman. That was classic. "I'm his son. Batman Junior. Batboy." That line had me rolling with laughter. If this is what Harkness can do in a single panel, his solo stint next issue will put me in Arkham! And his decking Zastrow was totally in character. He should watch his back, though: a plotting psycho like Zastrow won't soon forget a punch like that.

4) Last but not least, Batman kicking butt on page 9. Always good to see Bats knocking people around. Looks like Bats is mellowing out, though. In DARK KNIGHT Bruce would've broken Lawton's legs for shooting Heller. Here he approaches the problem calmly and decides to get Heller to the hospital instead. Obviously Heller's part in the "Phoenix Gambit" and his attempt to kill Floyd and Bats made Batman less angry about Heller getting blasted. I hope that after Deadshot gets his $100,001 from Waller, he'll join on a regular basis. I miss my favorite psycho.

Till next time ... G'day, mates!

Alan C. Page
9028 Morrison Road
New Orleans, LA 70127

* * * * *

Dear Sirs and Ma'am,
Re: SUICIDE SQUAD #43

Absolutely magnificent! "The Phoenix Gambit" is by far one of the best storylines of 1990. John and Kim have really outdone themselves this time. The storyline progressed nicely from beginning to end, holding the reader's attention all the way, and the characterization here in the Squad is the best you'll find anywhere. All of this only goes to show that my belief that John and Kim are THE two best writers in comics today is justified.

I must also commend Geof Isherwood. Although I had my reservations at first, Mr. Isherwood turned out to be the perfect penciller/inker because he manages to achieve a feel of grittiness and desperation that one would associate with a title like the SUICIDE SQUAD. Good show, sir.

I must also comment on the characters that you have chosen as the core members of the "new" Squad. Deadshot has been my absolute favorite since the start, and the team just wouldn't be the same without him, but I'm sorry that I can't say the same of Mari. I never cared for her when she was a member of the old Justice League of America, and I still don't. Since she was first introduced as a love interest for Ben, and since he no longer seems to be interested, is there any chance she'll be "eliminated" pretty soon?

I'm also glad that Ravan and Poison Ivy are with the Squad. Both of these characters have as yet untouched potential, and John and Kim are just the people to find it. But please, DON'T KILL THEM!

Well, that's all I have to offer, so until next time, Make Mine The Suicide Squad! See ya' in 30.

Sincerely,
Marson Fedrick
Route One, Box 615
Waynesboro, MS 39367

Kill Ravan or Ivy? We'd have to be crazy!

* * * * *

Dear team,

Congratulations on a well executed and much needed revitalization of a title near and dear to my heart. I love "The Phoenix Gambit" and the new angle on the Squad. Though I would have preferred that Batman had been left out of it, I realize that his presence is needed to bring in new readers. Anything to save the book from the fate of MANHUNTER. The stories are as fresh and clean as ever. Geof Isherwood more than fills the shoes of past masters McDonnell and Snyder. The new "spy" atmosphere suits the team well. The lineup is perfect for this. Please keep Vertigo around. Waller summed it up best when she said they weren't going to a costume party this time. Great line! In the midst of all the mutie madness and bitter realism (read: boring), the comic book world needs the SUICIDE SQUAD more than ever to stand the middle ground.

Sincerely,
Marc Bryant
Newport, TN

Thanks, Marc. We'll be keeping Vertigo around for the time being.

* * * * *

Dear Dan,

I read SUICIDE SQUAD #43. Then I immediately retrieved the previous three issues and reread the "Phoenix Gambit."

The change *was* needed to have the book remain fresh and up to date with today's world. No dinosaurs here. This book could not keep its quality if it did not reflect the world's changes. And there was a year's worth of change in only a couple of months.

I'm enjoying the international status of the team. So where in the world will the Squad travel next?

Melissa Page
236 New Salem Loop
Nortonville, KY 42442

Q: Where in the world?
A: There's no place like home!

* * * * *

Dear Squad:

When I first saw the splash page of SUICIDE SQUAD #43, "Black Queen's Mate," I knew I was in for an interesting conclusion to "The Phoenix Gambit." Well, I was not disappointed. "Black Queen's Mate" was a super issue, from the "plus a dollar" offer Amanda made to Lawton (which had me rolling on the floor, BTW!) to the stunning wrap-up with both Zastrow and Heller. The corker, of course, was the revelation of the man beneath the cowl! I had guessed it would be "Boomerbat" (with a nod to John) *grin*, but the unveiling was still a sight to behold, especially the interaction between Zastrow and Batman Junior (Batboy? BATBOY?? Help! I can't stop laughing!!) One has

to wonder if the real Dark Knight loaned out an extra suit, or if Waller managed to dig that up at the local costume shoppe. Great characterization here. Waller and Boomerang. Ben and Mari. Of course Deadshot was right in character ("Waller said to shoot him. Didn't say to kill him."). Poison Ivy, too ("That's too much like WORK!"). And Bats, well, what can I say? I VERY MUCH look forward to John's taking a turn on DETECTIVE real soon. I hope Kim's influence continues to be felt here and there—they make a good team! (I hear they make a good team as wife and husband, too!)

Did I mention how much I loved Geof Isherwood's art? WHAT?

Luke's gonna spell him next month?? Well, okay. But make sure Geof's back in sixty days! It surely looks like the Squad is back, and as the epilogue indicates, more sorely needed than ever! Seeya in thirty...

David M. Lambert
Memphis, TN

* * * * *

Dear Squad Members:

Just want to say that SUICIDE SQUAD undoubtedly has the best dialogue of any book in DC-dom, and "Black Queen's Gambit" is ample proof of that. With a few choice turns of phrase, the Yale/Ostrander team make each character come to life in the brief space of a panel. I always like seeing what can be done without the use of thought balloons to show the subconscious. A good artist can do it with a twist of a lip; a good writer does it with an offhand remark.

Deadshot, Ivy, Boomerang, Vixen, Bronze Tiger, and Waller, all indelibly realized in a few short phrases. Ravan in even less than that.

Now more than ever, we need the SUICIDE SQUAD to show us what comic book writing can be.

Paul J. Grant
5311 Wright Way South
West Bloomfield, MI 48322

On behalf of John and Kim, Paul, thanks.

* * * * *

Dear Dan,

Re: SUICIDE SQUAD #43

So William Heller hired Deadshot to off the Wall, eh? Hmm. He did say something about revenge way back in issue four, right? Took him long enough to give it a go, but I'd have considered trying it after Amanda went to prison. Any old inmate with enough hate and financial desire would've done the job, no questions asked, and next thing you know, Heller'd reward them with a high-ranking job upon release. Then again, if it happened that way, there wouldn't be a story to tell here, right?

Poison Ivy never struck me before as someone who'd lust for heavy political power. Good thing Amanda straightened her out before she made a bigger mess of things in Vlatava than there had been. Better that she should become a model (she does have a great figure, you know. Hubba hubba!), working with Vixen (Mari McCabe) in her studio. It's not quite like hard work, Ivy baby, but you would benefit from it greatly. Trust me.

Speaking of Vixen, if she doesn't want to deal with the "new look" Bronze Tiger, she can always quit the Squad and join the JLE. She's got a studio in Paris (JLE's base), so she'd fit in with Captain Atom's crew. Make sense to you? It does to me.

I knew Batman didn't let himself get caught by Blue Trinity. But Boomerang? Geez-Louise, if that isn't original thinking, I don't know what is. You know, if truth be told, Digger wears the Bat-suit pretty well. Hope his solo tale next ish offers a little further insight into Digger's life and times. The guy's really one cool dude.

Hmm, I am surprised that Bronze Tiger and Vixen took out Stalnoivolk as easily as they did, but you'd think that Gort would've been trained in *all forms of combat*. I'd hate to see what happens if he should face Superman one day. Gort, though, could be convinced that he should join the Squad, assuming he embraces *glasnost* and decides to come to America on his own, or as an agent of Gorbachev's government.

Lemme outta here. I'll see you in thirty.

Jacob Gilbert
118 Fourth Street, Apt. 1
Troy, NY 12180

Y'know, Jacob, I never cared much for ol' Vixen myself. What do you folks think?

* * * * *

People,

...Is it my imagination, or is Amanda beginning to put back some of those pounds that she worked so hard to shed? We're watchin' ya, 'mandy. Now go do a thousand laps around Belle Reve or I'm calling Richard Simmons!

Sweatin' to the Oldies,
Lon Wolf
2118 Ryan's Run East
Maple Shade, NJ 08052

Thanks, Lon. I think.

* * * * *

Dear Suicide Notes,

I would like to start off by thanking Dan for the first-class team he has assembled to draw, write, letter, and color this first-class book.

Ostrander and Yale's writing throughout "The Phoenix Gambit" was exquisite. And then you have the beautiful art by Isherwood. Isherwood is able to capture Ostrander and Yale's words, and then produce the final product of perfect pictures to capture the essence of what the writers are trying to manifest. Gafford's coloring is perfect. He can take a dreary frame, and make it look dreary, but at the same moment he can take a bright frame and give it the brighter effect.

I was reluctant to start reading SUICIDE SQUAD because it just did not sound like "my cup of tea." But because of Dave at Nightflight I decided to pick up "The Phoenix Gambit." One word describes this story: extravagant.

After I finished reading issue #43 I was compelled to write a letter and thank you for the super book that the "suicide squad" (i.e., Ostrander, Yale, Isherwood, Klein, Gafford, and Raspler) delivers to the reading public.

Keep up with the good work.

Jeff Gallacher
4151 Monarch Way
Salt Lake City, Utah

Thanks, Jeff. And thank you, too, Dave at Nightflight. Keep up the good work.

* * * * *

Dear Dan,

1: Ashes 2: Embers 3: Firefight 4: ...er, Black Queen's Mate.

We didn't start the fire. It was always burning since the world's been turning. If there was any justice in the world of comics, then fans would forget all about that OTHER Phoenix saga of about ten years ago. After all, this was far superior.

ROCK AND ROLL!

Rol Hirst
Huddersfield, W. Yorks
England

Yes, yes! Music to my ears!

* * * * *

NEXT ISSUE UNIVERSE:
The hair-raising conclusion of this spine-tingling, gut-churning Kobra story. Plus more scorpions, Vertigo in action, debates on the nature of free will, and the fight you've all been waiting for: RAVAN v. KOBRA. And nobody's left standing! Aaahhh! I can't wait! Neither can you! Admit it! I see you smiling! You know I'm right!
—Dan Raspler
Overripe